

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections

Claims 9, 13, 44, and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gueret '105.

These claims depend from either independent claim 1 or independent claim 34. Accordingly, they are allowable over Gueret '105 for at least the same reasons explained above.

Additionally, claims 9 and 44 recite an “applicator ... wherein the bristles are held to the support by overmolding the plastic material on the bristles.” Gueret '105 does not teach or suggest this feature of the invention. While the Examiner has asserted that, “[i]t would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art . . . to modify the process used to secure the bristles to the support [in Fig. 23 of Gueret '105] so that overmolding is the process used to make the product” (Office Action at 8), the Examiner has failed to cite to any support for this assertion in the prior art or explain why it would have been obvious to modify the reference in this way. See MPEP 2141(III) (“Office personnel must explain why the difference(s) between the prior art and the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.”). Accordingly, for this additional reason, the rejection of claims 9 and 44 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Conclusions

In view of the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all of the outstanding rejections, and timely allowance of all pending claims.

Applicant also requests that the Examiner rejoin the nonelected claims (i.e., claims 7, 10, 15, 19, 22, 42, 45, 50, 54, and 57) and allow them. Each of these claims depends from an allowable base claim.

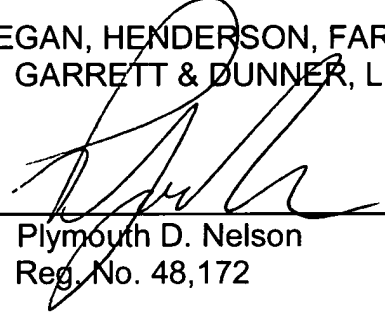
The Office Action contains statements and characterizations regarding the claims and the related art. Applicant declines to subscribe automatically to any statement or characterization in the Office Action, regardless of whether it is addressed above.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 18, 2008

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